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# EMPOWER PRIVATE SECTOR ACTIVITY

QUARTERLY REPORT #3: JAN-MAR 2015



*EMPOWER Private Sector started its grant program successfully by awarding some promising grant activities which will result with more jobs for women and young, through training and certification of women in ICT job profiles, training of unemployed IT developers, training for software engineers and junior IT technicians.*

**15 April 2015**

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# EMPOWER Private Sector

## QUARTERLY REPORT #3: JAN-MAR 2015

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Cardno Emerging Markets USA, Ltd.

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## Acronyms

<b>CFO</b>	<b>Chief Financial Officer</b>
<b>CO</b>	<b>Contracting Officer</b>
<b>COP</b>	<b>Chief of Party</b>
<b>COR</b>	<b>Contracting Officer's Representative</b>
<b>EOI</b>	<b>Expression of Interest</b>
<b>GoK</b>	<b>Government of Kosovo</b>
<b>HR</b>	<b>Human Resources</b>
<b>IFC</b>	<b>International Finance Corporation</b>
<b>IP</b>	<b>Implementing Partner</b>
<b>IT</b>	<b>Information Technology</b>
<b>NOA</b>	<b>New Opportunities for Agriculture Project</b>
<b>ORGCAT</b>	<b>Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool</b>
<b>PAD</b>	<b>Project Activities Database</b>
<b>PBMS</b>	<b>Performance Based Management System</b>
<b>RFP</b>	<b>Request for Proposal</b>
<b>SAF</b>	<b>Strategic Activities Fund</b>
<b>SASR</b>	<b>Sector Assessment and Selection Report</b>
<b>SMEs</b>	<b>Small and Medium Enterprises</b>
<b>USAID</b>	<b>United States Agency for International Development</b>
<b>VET</b>	<b>Vocational Education and Training</b>
<b>WfD</b>	<b>Workforce Development</b>

## 1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The USAID Kosovo EMPOWER Private Sector project is designed to stimulate large-scale job creation by elevating the competitiveness of Kosovo firms. This means helping them identify and connect to market opportunities, improve product design and quality, increase productivity, upgrade management and workforce skills, and expand access to finance. Considering that Kosovo continues to struggle with high levels of poverty and unemployment, over-dependence on imports, and an underdeveloped export sector, it is the mandate of EMPOWER Private Sector (EMPOWER) to materially address these critical development problems. To achieve this, EMPOWER concentrates on three objectives with corresponding components:

- **Component 1: Increasingly competitive and market-oriented Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs);**
- **Component 2: Job-creation;**
- **Component 3: Strengthen capacity of local partners.**

EMPOWER has selected certain growth-ready sectors for intensive support, but will also continue to seek out and take advantage of opportunities for expansive job creation in any value chain, through workforce skills development and attraction of foreign and domestic investment. The activity has an affirmative focus on assisting underemployed and disadvantaged populations. It includes North Kosovo in all of its activities. It will expand earning opportunities for women, and will encourage the elevation of women into senior business management roles.

An important element of EMPOWER is building the institutional and professional capacities of local economic development service providers to enable wide outreach to businesses throughout Kosovo. In order to maximize impact, the project will also collaborate closely with all private sector development programs with similar goals sponsored by international financial institutions, other bilateral donors, and national and local Kosovo government agencies.

## 2. HIGHLIGHTS DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

In response to our call for applications through Annual Program Statement (APS), EMPOWER started receiving applications and our team started identifying businesses which represent good opportunity. Total number of businesses opportunities identified under Component 1 reaches **39 identified sector investment opportunities** which exceeds the targeted number for this Activity Area for 9.

Total number of viable focus sector investment opportunities (interventions / activities) selected for interventions under Component 1 reaches 22, which exceeds the targeted number for this Activity Area for 10. While total number of jobs expected is 686 or **536 more than projected** for this activity area in Year One Workplan.

Total number of businesses opportunities identified under Component 2 to date reaches **39 identified sector investment opportunities** which exceeds the targeted number for this Activity Area for 19.

Total number of viable focus sector investment opportunities (interventions / activities) selected for interventions under Component 2 reaches 13, which exceeds the targeted number for this Activity Area for 5. While total number of jobs expected is 396 or **296 more than projected** for this activity area in Year One Workplan.

Throughout this quarter EMPOWER supported 7 trade show and B2B activities. EMPOWER expects to achieve targeted number of activities as projected in Workplan Year 1. For this activity participated 63 different company beneficiaries.

During this reporting period EMPOWER received 162 Concept Notes (Expression of Interest) from applicants throughout Kosovo. The amount of funds requested from these 162 applicants is €6,258,601.

EMPOWER Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) is reviewing Concept Notes on regular bases. From total of 162 received TEC rejected 73 of them, while total in the process are 89 Concept Notes. Further breakdown of the status of review is shown in the table in the right. For 89 applications which are in the process of review the applicants asked for €3.8 million, claiming that they would create 1691 jobs.

In the reporting period, EMPOWER staff have proactively reached out to potential direct beneficiaries of EMPOWER's grant scheme and the general public. We have used a variety of tools to inform our audiences about how we support businesses and what we do to strengthen the position of women and youth in the private sector. The program's **road show** was a success – we brought together over to 280 representatives of businesses, local associations and municipal authorities, including mayors. EMPOWER was part of the **information fairs** organized by the U.S. Embassy in Pristina Public Affairs Office and USAID in municipalities with a majority Serbian population.

### 3. STATUS OF EACH OF ACTIVITIES AND TASKS AS DEFINED IN THE WORK PLAN

#### General & Operational

#### 1. Administrative

##### 1.1 Identify and hire all technical and operational staff

The following technical and operational staff members were contracted in Quarter 3:

Name	Position
Liza Marku	Team Leader Component 2 (Started working on January 8)
Burak Gerdovci	Driver/Maintenance Officer (Replaced Faton Tahiri who left the project on February 12)

##### 1.2 Establish and equip EMPOWER office

EMPOWER Office is fully equipped and operational.

##### 1.3 Institute all EMPOWER operational and financial policies and procedures

To date, we have successfully established all policies governing HR, Procurement, Reporting and Financial Management. Some of the major accomplishments for this quarter include the following:

- **Grants Manual:** We completed and submitted the grants manual for the mission's consideration on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. Grants Manual was approved by the office of RCO on January 30, 2015. This opened the road for EMPOWER to start issuing grant agreements

#### 2. Monitoring & Evaluation

##### 2.1 Complete PBMS

The Performance-Based Management System Plan (PBMS) was finalized and approved by USAID in Quarter 2

##### 2.2 Customize and install Project Activities Database (PAD)

During this quarter EMPOWER worked on final version of the forms and layout of the PAD. The company that developed the original version of PAD is contacted and we presented the redesigned layout. IT Company is working in finalizing the PAD and we expect that this activity will be completed in Quarter 3.

#### 3. SAF Management

##### 3.1 Prepare operations manual on procurements and sub contracts

Completed in Quarter 1.

##### 3.2 Prepare Grants Manual

On October 22, 2014 we completed and submitted the grants manual for the consideration of USAID RCO. On January 30, 2015 we received the approval of the grant manual from RCO office.

### 3.3 Prepare and publish the Annual Program Statement (APS) to invite applications

EMPOWER published the APS in its website [www.empowerkosovo.org](http://www.empowerkosovo.org), and announced it publicly at the launching event of EMPOWER on December 9. Additionally EMPOWER staff organized a series of public information sessions across Kosovo, and met with over 280 representatives of businesses and economic development organizations to share information on the business sectors we support, our grant scheme and application process.

### 3.4 Receive, review, select, and approve subcontracts / grants

During this reporting period EMPOWER received 162 Concept Notes (Expression of Interest) from applicants throughout Kosovo. The amount of funds requested from these 162 applicants is €6,258,601. Table in the right shows breakdown on applications by major regions including North Kosovo.

REGION	CN #	SAF Amount Requested
North	36	€900,119
Prishtina	40	€1,457,086
Ferizaj	28	€1,347,379
Prizren	18	€977,227
Peja	15	€631,250
Gjilan	12	€394,850
Mitrovica South	12	€480,690
Gjakove	1	€70,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>€6,258,601</b>

EMPOWER Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) is reviewing Concept Notes on regular bases. From total of 162 received TEC rejected 73 of them, while total in the process are 89 Concept Notes. Further breakdown of the status of review is shown in the table in the right. For 89 applications which are in the process of review the applicants asked for €3.8 million, claiming that they would create 1691 jobs.

STATUS	CN #	SAF Amount Requested	Jobs Expected
NOT ACCEPTED	73	€ 2,424,951	956
Received - In Review	11	€ 449,310	140
Accepted - In Process	55	€ 2,656,290	950
ICF APPROVED	23	€ 728,050	601
Total in Process	89	€ 3,833,650	1691
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>€ 6,258,601</b>	<b>2647</b>

The following tables summarizes all SAF investments up to this reporting period.

#### SAF Summary

Status	Number	SAF	Co-Finance	# Jobs	Leverage	SAF / JOB
Final COR Approved	8	€ 82,498	€ 226,971	135	2.8	€ 611
TEC Approved	5	€ 134,000	€ 148,500	147	1.1	€ 912
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>€ 216,498</b>	<b>€ 375,471</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>€ 768</b>
<b>Breakdown by Category</b>						
Firm Level Growth	5	€ 134,000	€ 148,500	147	1.1	€ 912
Market Development	4	€ 19,878	€ 48,501	15	2.4	€ 1,325
Workforce Development	4	€ 62,620	€ 178,470	120	2.9	€ 522
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>€ 216,498</b>	<b>€ 375,471</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>€ 768</b>
<b>Of which North Kosovo</b>						
Firm Level Growth	4	€ 109,900	€ 177,500	53	1.6	€ 2,074
<b>Subtotal North Kosovo</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>€ 109,900</b>	<b>€ 177,500</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>€ 2,074</b>

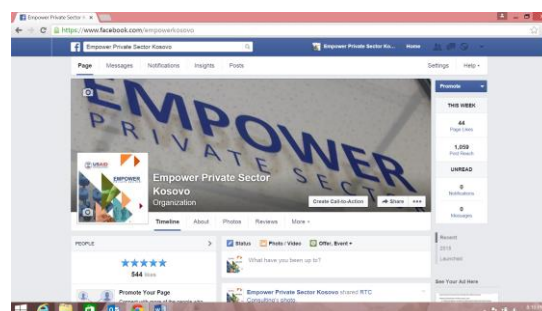


Of which <b>Microenterprises</b>						
Firm Level Growth	5	€ 87,000	€ 156,000	55	1.8	€ 1,582
Workforce Development	1	€ 9,400	€ 3,200	10	0.3	€ 940
<b>Subtotal Microenterprises</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>€ 96,400</b>	<b>€ 159,200</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>€ 1,483</b>

## 4. Public Events & Communications

### 4.1 Prepare initial EMPOWER print materials; establish project website and Facebook page

EMPOWER Private Sector launched on February 11, 2015 the program Facebook page, which is the more dynamic part of our online presence alongside the program website that was launched in the previous quarter. Considering the broad audience our program targets, which includes businesses and youth, Facebook has proven to be an effective tool for communicating our news, successes and for helping reach out to many in a very short time about the grant opportunities they can benefit from. As of the end of the quarterly, the page has attracted 544 likes. We update the page several times per week, and have succeeded in engaging this community in liking, commenting and sharing our news. We pay a lot of attention to our posts to ensure the texts are brief, active and interesting, accompanied by lively pictures that tell the story of what we do. The program uses the Facebook page also as a tool for general awareness raising on cross-cutting issues, such as the importance of including women in all occupations, of investing efforts in workforce development, and of businesses always being mindful of energy efficiency options. Posts are in English, Albanian and Serbian. Our webpage content reflects the program's objectives and what we do to achieve these objectives on daily basis. The program webpage too is updated several times a week, and all information is available in three languages.



### 4.2 EMPOWER Launch Events

In the reporting period, EMPOWER staff have proactively reached out to potential direct beneficiaries of EMPOWER's grant scheme and the general public. We have used a variety of tools to inform our audiences about how we support businesses and what we do to strengthen the position of women and youth in the private sector. The program's **road show** was a success – we brought together over to 280 representatives of businesses, local associations and municipal authorities, including mayors. EMPOWER was part of the **information fairs** organized by the U.S. Embassy in Pristina Public Affairs Office and USAID in municipalities with a majority Serbian population.

#### 4.2.1 EMPOWER Private Sector Visits Municipalities

EMPOWER put a lot of effort in organizing the road show events in five municipalities: Mitrovicë/a, Prizren, Gjiilan/Gnjilane, Ferizaj/Uroševac and Pejë/Peć. We initially visited each municipality and met with Municipal Directors of Administration or Municipal Assembly Chairpersons in. The purpose of the meetings was to introduce the project to the municipal authorities, and seek their collaboration in organizing the information sessions for the businesses of these regions in the coming weeks. Each municipality representative showed support, and provided the premises where Municipal Assembly meetings take place for EMPOWER Private Sector to use for the information sessions.

The schedule of municipal presentations was as follows: Pejë/Peć on January 21; Ferizaj/Uroševac on January 23; Prizren on January 27; Gjiilan/Gnjilane on January 29; Mitrovicë/a south on February 4.



All these events received very good publicity, especially by the local media outlets. In Pejë/Peć, the regional TV station *RTV Dukagjini*, also part of two cable platforms present throughout the country, reported on the event in the news editions of the day. EMPOWER Private Sector's DCOP was interviewed by *Radio Peja*. The Municipality of Pejë/Peć posted a piece on the event on the official website <http://bit.ly/1EB3NqH>. Another report was published in the region's online news agency *Gazeta Lokale*. The report can be accessed through the following link <http://bit.ly/1t27gwX>.

In Ferizaj/Uroševac two local TV stations: *TV Tema* and *TV Liria* reported on the event in their respective news editions. Reports on the presentation were posted on the website of the Municipality <http://bit.ly/1wrXHCC>; the region's online newspaper *Ferizajpress* <http://bit.ly/1t27qnZ> and two national online news agencies *Gazetaexpress* <http://bit.ly/1L36i9D> and *Kosovapress* <http://bit.ly/1CFM9jV>.

In Prizren, the three regional TV stations *RTV Besa*, *TV Opinion* and *TV Prizreni*, also part of two cable platforms present throughout the country, reported on the event in the news editions of the day. EMPOWER Private Sector's DCOP was interviewed by *RTV Besa*. These TV stations interviewed participants, who expressed positive opinions about the event and the usefulness of information received. Reports were published in the following links: *TV Prizreni* <http://bit.ly/15WXvp>, *TV Opinion* <http://bit.ly/1DbKqmH>, *Prizrenpress* <http://bit.ly/1JLv5gQ>.

In Gjiilan/Gnjilane the local TV station: *TV Vali* reported on the event in the news edition. Reports on the presentation were posted on the largest regional online agency *Rajonipress* <http://bit.ly/1uDZeWx> and two other news portals *2lonline* <http://bit.ly/18xiUHe> and *Radio Star* <http://bit.ly/1z5Tn1X>.

## MAYORS SAID

**Gazmend Muhaxheri**, Mayor of Pejë/Peć expressed full support of the institution he leads to EMPOWER Private Sector's Objectives.

**Muharrem Svarqa**, Mayor of Ferizaj/Uroševac stated at the public event that EMPOWER's support comes at the right time for the Municipality of Ferizaj/Uroševac, to provide support to businesses that are lagging behind due to economic and transitional difficulties.

**Lutfi Haziri**, Mayor of Gjiilan/Gnjilane encouraged all the businesses of the region to make good use of the opportunities

### 4.2.2 U.S. Embassy & USAID Information Fairs

Dates of the fairs: Leposavić/q on February 9; Zvečan/Zveçan on February 11; Mitrovicë/a north on February 25; Zubin Potok on March 6; and Shtërpce/Štrpce on March 31.



EMPOWER had the lead in organizing the event in this Leposavić/q, which attracted over 200 people. In all these information fairs, we disseminated information materials in Serbian, including the one-pager with the project description, Annual Program Statement, and Frequently Asked Questions about the grant scheme. EMPOWER staff have provided detailed answers to questions from the visitors.

Media attending these information fair days showed a particular interest in EMPOWER, thus assisting in providing good coverage for our activities and objectives. In Leposavić/q TV MIR and Radio Kosova (Serbian language program) interviewed the project's DCOP. In Mitrovicë/a TV Mir interviewed our Senior Advisor for the North. In Shtërpce/Štrpce, TV Herc and RTK2 interviewed our Program Director.

#### 4.2.3 EMPOWER Promotion Events

On March 11, EMPOWER organized an event to mark the first grant agreement with Menakon Fashion House in Gjilan. The ceremony took place at Menakon premises. The event received very good promotion. Two local TV stations of the region covered the event: Vali TV and Zico TV. Two magazines were also present: Kosovarja and Flatra. The latter published the news item in its web-portal <http://bit.ly/1EGg9AQ> and Facebook page. Online news agency Kosovalive360 published the story at <http://bit.ly/1L6hKE2> EMPOWER posted an update on the webpage and an album on the project's Facebook page, which was shared by USAID Kosovo Facebook.

EMPOWER worked closely with the Association of Wood Processors of Kosovo to inform the public about the participation of 5 Kosovo wood processing companies in the International Furniture Fair ALBANIA 2015 in Tirana. A press release issued to Kosovo media, and posted on EMPOWER's website, was picked up by several online news portals.

### 4.3 Research donor programs working in the Competitive & Market-Oriented SMEs and the North

This is an ongoing activity that started in Quarter 1 and continued through Quarter 2 and 3.

Some examples of coordination efforts with other donor project/activities are presented below with details on status of coordination efforts

Donor/Project	Status of Coordination with Donor
<i>USAID Projects Brezovica Roundtable</i>	The USAID projects were briefed by the Brezovica PIU as to the progress of the transaction and the investment plan. EMPOWER expressed its readiness to inform and organize producers capable of supplying products and services required for the development of the resort, and to organize workforce and company training in tourism services. The PIU director (Jill Jamison) agreed to meet with us when she returns soon to Kosovo, in order to plan follow up, which would include a meeting with the resort developer at an appropriate time, followed by meetings with Strpce municipal stakeholders, and then producers from the wider region. It was also proposed to connect the Brezovica-related tourism workforce initiative to a dedicated VTC/COC institution, with Prizren a likely candidate. We will organize a preliminary meeting on this within the coming week.

Donor/Project	Status of Coordination with Donor
<i>IFC Kosovo</i>	IFC is interested in hearing about companies that EMPOWER considers good investment candidates, that need larger amounts of financing. Also, IFC has funds for renewable energy / energy efficiency investments, as well as a program to educate banks about business and consumer lending in this sector, and offered their specialist to attend meetings of stakeholders in the renewable energy / energy efficiency value chain that EMPOWER is organizing.
<i>KIESA</i>	KIESA prepared early in January a list of the trade Fairs that will be supported by MTI, which they shared with EMPOWER and in fact requested our collaboration for ITB. We had discussed collaboration on others and wanted to follow. However, we learned in this meeting that the new Minister has cancelled this list, presumably due to its new private sector development strategy in preparation. EMPOWER was invited to submit its recommended set of trade fairs to support, which we will do. We noted the Fashion/Textile Fair in Tirana in June, and the Swiss Furniture Fair in September.
<i>SDC PPSE Project</i>	PPSE was interested in our views on supporting the textile and wood sectors, as they plan to add one of these as a focus sector for their program, as well as our social inclusion activities. We explained what EMPOWER is doing and agreed to keep each other informed and complement/co-invest when possible. We already have good cooperation with this project in tourism.
<i>GIZ North Kosovo Office</i>	GIZ office in North Mitrovica was interested on EMPOWER's activities in NK, for future cooperation. He had heard of our work to connect STIKK with the Cable Operators Association of NK, since GIZ works actively in ICT. He mentioned that the MAFRD will organize trainings on its new grants fund for representatives of Kosovo municipal departments of agriculture. Because municipalities in the North have not established such departments, their farmers lacked information and did not apply for grants in the past. We recommended some persons who can be invited for the trainings and connect NK farmers to the program.
<i>CDF-EU project</i>	Meeting was organized to clarify potential cooperation and financial cost share for some activities that CDF-EU project has in plan to implement in Ferizaj Region. We agreed that both EMPOWER and CDF-EU project will work together to support one trade show that will be important and priority for the companies from Ferizaj and the rest of Kosovo. Also, we will coordinate further certification (ISO and other important) plan and together prepare plan to co-fund this activity too.
<i>World Bank, Pristina</i>	We requested a meeting to learn of their programs and plans in PSD. They expressed optimism over recent forward motion in the design of the Credit Guarantee Fund by the USAID Empower Credit Support activity. They also described the forthcoming \$31MM loan for an energy efficiency fund that will be managed by the Ministry for Economic Development. This fund is of great interest to EMPOWER because of our focus on this sector, and the potential of this financing to create substantial employment in companies producing energy efficient construction materials and companies providing building renovation services.
<i>USAID REG and USAID Macedonia Small Business Expansion Projects</i>	Meeting to further collaboration in regional tourism promotion, following earlier meetings. Discussed participation of Kosovo tour operators on the regional tourism stand that REG is helping to fund at the upcoming ITB tourism fair in Berlin. Also agreed to collaborate in planned "EDU 1" training in Kosovo to be provided by ATTA experts with USAID REG support, covering outdoor and adventure tourism basics. This training will be the first of its kind in Kosovo. We further agreed to continue with the needs assessment for training and

Donor/Project	Status of Coordination with Donor
	certification of the hotel and lodging service providers through the American Hotel and Lodging Education Institute (AHLEI) framework.

## **Component 1 - Job Creation through Increasingly Competitive & Market-Oriented SMEs in Focus Sectors**

### **1. Identify growth-ready sectors for project focus**

#### **1.1 Draft Sector Assessment & Selection Report**

Sector Assessment report was finalized and approved in Quarter 2

### **2. Identify job-creating business opportunities & challenges**

#### **2.1. Consult with firms in Component 1 focus sectors to identify business opportunities and challenges**

**(Outputs/Deliverables/Expected Results for Year 1 Workplan - 30 focus sector investment opportunity candidates (interventions / activities) identified and recorded**

#### ***Wood Sector***

In response to our call for applications through Annual Program Statement (APS), EMPOWER started receiving applications and our team started identifying businesses which represent good opportunity. In the Wood processing sector EMPOWER visited and consulted 27 different businesses throughout this reporting period. Most of these have potential and have presented some good opportunities.

#### ***Apparel Sector***

The Apparel Sector Similar to Wood Processing Sector was very busy visiting business and identifying opportunities and challenges under this sector. Throughout this reporting period EMPOWER visited and consulted 12 businesses

#### ***Component 1 total***

Total number of businesses opportunities identified under Component 1 reaches **39 identified sector investment opportunities** which exceeds the targeted number for this Activity Area for 9.

#### **2.2. Evaluate and prioritize job-creating business opportunities**

**(Outputs/Deliverables/Expected Results for Year 1 Workplan - 12 viable focus sector investment opportunities (interventions / activities) selected for interventions; 24 total beneficiary's incl SMEs in supply chain. Total Year 1 results target for all Component 1 activities: €3.5 MM sales growth, 150 jobs)**

#### ***Wood Sector***

As the meetings with businesses to identify opportunities and challenges were initiated, our team started evaluating the opportunities, identify them as investment candidates and finally were presented as Activity Approval requests. These investment candidate opportunities and later Activity Approval requests are presented at the EMPOWER Investment Review meeting which takes place every week on Tuesday. So far EMPOWER identified **11 Investment Candidates** for Wood Processing Sector, with total estimated Investment from EMPOWER at **€443,800**. Total number of expected number of new jobs for this activity area under Wood Sector is **364 jobs**

A summary with information on the businesses and the identified opportunities in Wood Processing Sector is presented in the prioritized job-creating business opportunities.

Applicant	Description of EMPOWER Activity	Sum of SAF Requested	Other Funding	Total	# Jobs	Average of SAF/Job
Te Naseri Factory Expansion	Furniture	€ 58,000	€ 109,000	€ 167,000	100	€ 580
Wood Processors Association	Albania Trade Fair Mar 2015	€ 5,300	€ 5,000	€ 10,300		€ 0
Binni	Furniture (Expansion of Production)	€ 4,000	€ 3,000	€ 7,000	10	€ 400
Doni	Updating technology for increase production	€ 19,000	€ 4,500	€ 23,500	20	€ 950
Elnor	Increase efficiency and speed up operations	€ 73,500	€ 43,000	€ 116,500	50	€ 1,470
Frasheri	Production of wooden houses	€ 75,000	€ 425,000	€ 500,000	40	€ 1,875
Kosova Model	Expansion of production	€ 70,000	€ 900,000	€ 970,000	48	€ 1,458
Lumi	New production line for Door Production	€ 30,000	€ 300,000	€ 330,000	15	€ 2,000
Mobileria Bimi	Expansion of Production for Export Market	€ 5,000	€ 8,350	€ 13,350	5	€ 1,000
OXA	Expansion of existing production capacities	€ 50,000	€ 250,000	€ 300,000	40	€ 1,250
Shehu	Expansion of production	€ 54,000	€ 246,000	€ 300,000	36	€ 1,500
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>€ 443,800</b>	<b>€ 2,293,850</b>	<b>€ 2,737,650</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>€ 1,135</b>

### Apparel Sector

So far EMPOWER identified **10 Investment Candidates** for Apparel Sector, with total estimated Investment from EMPOWER at **€327,000**. Total number of expected number of new jobs for this activity area under Apparel Sector is **322**.

A summary with information on the businesses and the identified opportunities in Apparel Sector is presented in the prioritized job-creating business opportunities.

Applicant	Description of EMPOWER Activity	Sum of SAF Requested	Other Funding	Total	# Jobs	Average of SAF/Job
Kosova Tex	Training of war victims	€ 12,000	€ 13,000	€ 25,000	20	€ 600
Menakon In-Company Training	Training of 20 women for production of wedding dresses	€ 11,400	€ 5,000	€ 16,400	15	€ 760
Nori Tex	Factory Expansion / Underwear	€ 22,000	€ 66,000	€ 88,000	12	€ 1,833
Solid	Production of leather shoes for kids	€ 55,000	€ 40,000	€ 95,000	45	€ 1,222
Staff	Expansion of production	€ 75,000	€ 125,000	€ 200,000	120	€ 625
Toni Tex	Expansion of production capacities	€ 20,000	€ 10,000	€ 30,000	25	€ 800



Unikat Factory Expansion	Uniforms	€ 30,000	€ 68,000	€ 98,000	25	€ 1,200
Yllka Brada	New line of Production	€ 10,000	€ 5,800	€ 15,800	15	€ 667
Napa-Prom	Expansion of production	€ 52,500	€ 136,500	€ 189,000	7	€ 7,500
Riki Jeans	Production of jeans	€ 39,100	€ 38,100	€ 77,200	38	€ 1,029
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>€ 327,000</b>	<b>€ 507,400</b>	<b>€ 834,400</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>€ 1,624</b>

### **Component 1 total**

Total number of viable focus sector investment opportunities (interventions / activities) selected for interventions under Component 1 reaches 22, which exceeds the targeted number for this Activity Area for 10. While total number of jobs expected is 686 or **536 more than projected** for this activity area in Year One Workplan.

## **3. Widen and deepen connections to buyer**

### **3.1. Design and implement B2B activities to stimulate business opportunities**

#### **3.1.1. Selective trade show attendance**

**(Outputs/Deliverables/Expected Results for Year 1 Workplan - 6-8 trade shows / B2B activities completed, 25 company beneficiaries. - New business for wood and apparel producers with 5 domestic importers, 15 beneficiaries - 10 new buyer relationships)**

#### **Wood Sector**

During this quarter EMPOWER supported Association of Wood Processors of Kosovo to exhibit with five Kosovo Furniture Companies to exhibit in International Furniture Fair in Tirana, Albania and EMPOWER accompanied over 20 companies from wood sector in Trade Fair Made Expo in Milano, Italy.

*International Furniture Fair, Tirana, Albania* took place from 12-15 March 2015. EMPOWER supported five Kosovo furniture companies to attend this fair (Lesna and Lesna design, Daqa, KoBA and Sharra), so that they could promote themselves especially to the rapidly-expanding development of the Albanian coast for tourism – hotels, tourist apartments, B&Bs. In addition, Albanian furniture producers' exports in 2014 were €300MM, and Kosovo companies can subcontract to them, or cooperate with them in marketing to EU buyers, especially in Italy. Lesna already is present in Albanian market with a representative office, and Daqa wants to establish itself there with the same model. KoBA and Sharra are smaller companies with great potential to growth and both have plans for investment in production during 2015. EMPOWER worked closely with the AWPK to publicize Kosovo's participation in this event and USAID's support for it, issuing a press release that was picked up by several online news portals.

*Made Expo* took place from 18-21 March 2015 in Milano, Italy. Two months before the Fair the Kosovo Italian Embassy facilitated a visit by the organizers of this fair to Pristina, to present it to wood industry stakeholders. AWPK and over 50 companies who attended this presentation expressed interest, so EMPOWER agreed to send a staff representative to it, to assess its value in developing business opportunities for Kosovo wood processors, especially in the Italian market. As it turned out, the event proved to be somewhat disappointing to the delegation. The Made Expo organizers had unexpectedly eliminated halls that had previously hosted furniture producers, and had focused the fair entirely on wood construction products (doors, windows, etc.). The fair is only every second year, and it is determined with AWPK to be worth attending with a stand in 2017, it would be only with these suppliers. A positive element was identifying and establishing a relationship with a qualified sales agent for buyers of these products in Italy.

#### **Apparel Sector**

During this quarter EMPOWER visited two International Fairs of Gown producers and organized B2B meeting with Albanian/ Italian producers

EMPOWER Private Sector supported the visit of three Kosovo bridal gown producers – Menakon, Ilirida, and Mina Fashion House – to the Izmir Wedding Gowns & Evening Wear Fair (February 4-6)

Texpo Eurasia Fair of Textile Machinery in Istanbul (February 6-8). The Kosovo companies met with potential business agents and buyers and explored fashion trends. They met with input suppliers, including contacts for thread and yarn. They were also exposed to the latest models of machinery for laser cutting, circular knitting, weaving, and embellishing.

EMPOWER visited Mediteran Company based in Tirana that produces for Italy. With Arben Peci, Administrator of the Company we discussed 5 issues. Firstly, EMPOWER project is planning to organize Industrial Convention where we want to have textile experts. Mr. Peci would be a great person to have as a key speaker considering his experience in textile production, particularly for shirts. In addition, Mr. Peci is the president of NCGF (National Chamber of Garments and Footwear) so he could talk regarding the impact of NCGF that can be used as a sample for Kosovo.

### ***Component 1 Total***

Throughout this quarter Component 1 completed 5 trade show and B2B activities. EMPOWER expects to achieve targeted number of activities as projected in Workplan Year 1. For this activity participated 63 different company beneficiaries.

### **3.2. Establish / recruit producer sales agents**

#### **(Outputs/Deliverables/Expected Results for Year 1 Workplan - 5 agents/agencies recruited)**

#### ***Wood Sector***

During this reporting period, we have worked towards identifying market agents as well as establishing working relations in targeted markets such as Albania, Germany and Italy.

In the wood processing sector, during the assessment phase and later direct visits to companies, some companies are interested to get to the market of Germany, Albania and therefore identified candidate (Mr. Granit Nikqi) to be engaged as agent made his first visit to companies: Tefik Canga, Elnor, Lumi and Shehu. Currently, he is working in his action plan for these visited companies and EMPOWER is expecting to engage him as Agent for the next period, based on Action plan and engagement days plan. Mr. Nikqi is working currently company Renolit SE ([www.renolit.com](http://www.renolit.com)), from Munich, Germany.

#### ***Apparel Sector***

During this reporting period, we have worked towards identifying market agents as well as establishing working relations in targeted markets such as Albania, Germany. We have identified so far one potential Sales Agent, Mr. Bardhi Sejdarasi. His first task should be to organize B2B meetings with domestic producers with potential buyers in Textile Fair in Albania that will be held on the 4-6 June 2015.

### ***Component 1 Total***

Two out of five agents identified. Activities in this area are expected to increase in following quarter.

### **3.3. Widen / deepen supply chains to network SMEs into lead company opportunities**

#### **(Outputs/Deliverables/Expected Results for Year 1 Workplan - 50 SMEs newly networked with lead firms, 2 industry conventions organized)**

#### ***Wood Sector***

EMPOWER team is identifying on regular basis all opportunities for clustering businesses from selected sectors. During this period EMPOWER had individual meeting with Kosovo biggest retailer shops of furniture in order to identify market players in Furniture in Kosovo and also identified obstacles that retailers are identifying in domestic production. We also were informed that Ferizaj Region has biggest number of small producers in one place, which has great potential for networking and linkage with biggest producers that EMPOWER is supporting through grants. Next step, together with EU funded project for Ferizaj region, is to identify all interested companies for networking and create non-formal group of businesses from that region. During this process we will identify key products that these companies can produce and later link with bigger producers from Kosovo.



### 3.4. Improve promotion

**(Outputs/Deliverables/Expected Results for Year 1 Workplan - Repeated advertisements in 2 wood and apparel industry trade journals. For 10 lead firms in the two focus sectors: adequate web presence; improved visual identity. 2 shared promotional web portals – 1 for Kosovo wood and 1 for Kosovo apparel)**

#### *Wood Sector & Apparel Sector*

With this activity EMPOWER is planning to promote Kosovo Wood and Apparel Sectors at foreign trade publications. During this and previous quarter our team has worked in identifying the best journals and the best ways to promote these two sectors. We plan to have the Kosovo wood processing and apparel sectors presented in international trade journals, but we are still in the process of preparation of the sectors logo and portal, in order that these promotions would be more substantial and with minimum standards required. During next phase, EMPOWER is going to organize several focus groups in order to identify and agree on the sector promotion materials and establish industry/sector web portals too. After this process, natural step would be promotion of the sector in already identified journals and publications, both for furniture and apparel. For Kosovo market, we already identified and made first add with magazine Flatra, promoting fashion company Menakon from Gjilan.

## 4. Elevate product design and quality

### 4.1. Improve product development and design to fulfill business opportunities

**(Outputs/Deliverables/Expected Results for Year 1 Workplan - 10 beneficiary companies develop new products. 20 designer / producer apprenticeships / internships initiated)**

No significant activities to be reported for this activity area for this reporting period

### 4.2. Improve productivity and expand formal quality certification to fulfill business opportunities

**(Outputs/Deliverables/Expected Results for Year 1 Workplan - 10 technical assistance engagements for productivity improvement and quality certification. 15-20 formal quality certifications initiated or achieved. 1 Quality Certification Fund established with multiple co-funding, including local government)**

No significant activities to be reported for this activity area for this reporting period

## **Component 2: Job Creation through Workforce Development & in Opportunistic Sectors**

### 1. Identify job-creating business opportunities & challenges in opportunistic sectors

#### 1.1 Consult with firms in Component 2 opportunistic sectors to identify business opportunities and challenges

**(Outputs/Deliverables/Expected Results for Year 1 Workplan - 20 investment opportunity candidates (interventions / activities) in opportunistic sectors identified and recorded)**

#### *Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Sector*

Empower has identified 3 main clusters of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency sector: a) wood biomass fuel producers and stove producers; b) insulation production companies and c) geothermal/thermic pumps and solar installers/producers.

During Q3 EMPOWER focused its activities on identifying and analyzing cluster a) wood biomass fuel producers and stove producers. Within two months almost all local producers were identified 15 wood fuel pellet and briquette producers and 7 stove producers, total 22 local producers and 15 other stakeholders (government ministries and agencies, donors, financial institutions: FMI, EBRD, KOSEP, TEB, MTI,

UNDP, GIZ, MED, AKEE, SHERK, World Bank, AUK, AEKOM-EU, EU and CUSTOMS), reaching total 58 stakeholders of this cluster/value chain.

WOOD BIOMASS	Company name	Owner/Manager	Municipality	Product1	Production Tons/year 2014	SAF Amount request	New Jobs	SAF amount/ Jobs	Product 2	Production Tons/year 2014
1	K-Berisha	Kastriot Berisha	Malisheve	Pellet	1,800					
2	Thes Ari	Bashkim Zejnullahu	Klllokot	Pellet	2,700	75,000	4	18,750	Briquette	700
3	Evropa	Mladen Miličević	Mitrovica	Pellet	1,200	44,900	20	2,245		
4	Biopellet	Faruk Prebeza	Mitrovica	Pellet	800	15,000	12	1,250		
5	Elfa	Elbasan Maliqi	Mitrovica	Pellet	2,000					
6	Lean	Ilir Vokshi	Gjakove	Pellet	600					
7	Molika	Bastri Sinani	Prishtine	Pelle	500	12,000	12	1,000	Briquette	400
8	Jeta -H	Xhevdet Hasanmetaj	Decan	Pellet	200	12,000	9	1,333	Briquette	200
9	Pell@green	Afrimi Demaj	Kamenica	Pellet	500					
10	Green Heat	Argjent Hyseni/ Alba	Prishtine	Pellet	50					
11	Dragaj Group	Kujtim Dragaj/ Arsin	Mitrovica	Pellet						
12		Blerim Muriqi	Peja	Pellet						
PELLET TOTAL PRODUCTION					TOTAL	10,350	Total Briquet Production			1,660
13	OXA- EKOBRI	Gazmend Beqa	Ferizaj	Briquete						150
14	EKO- Briket	Reshat Zymberi	Ferizaj	Briquette		10,000	10	1,000		210
15	Risia	Zenel&Haxhi Muriqi	Peja	Briquette						

List of 15 wood biomass fuel producers (briquette and pellet) including SAF investment job opportunities.

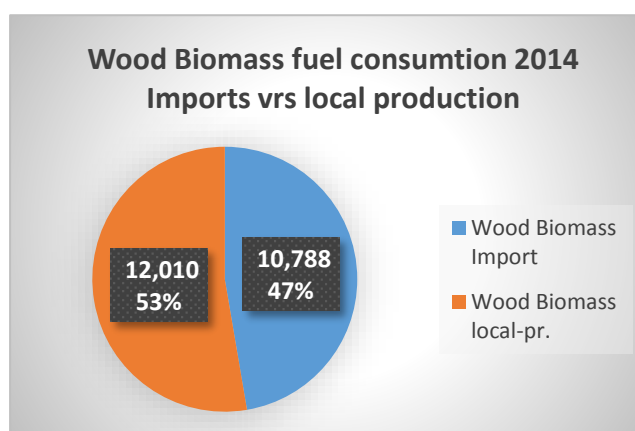
All listed biomass and stove producers were either met in person at the Empower office or at the business premises or were interviewed via phone. Therefore yearly production, price, import competition, product quality, raw material supplies and future investment plans were discussed.

STOVES	Company name	Owner/Manager	Municipality	Product	Production PC/ annually
16	EKO Energji	Artan Stublla/ Ibrahim	Prishtine	Stoves/ Burner	170
17	Feroda	Hekuran Ejupi	Prishtine	Stoves	12
18	ArchTime	Agim/Nexhmedin Av	Prishtine	Stoves	7
19	Metali	Kushtrim Hoxha	Prishtine	Stoves	400
20	Famipa/Ferol		Prizren	Stoves	
21	Ylli Term	Fatmir	Lipjan	Stove	300
22	Enrad	Taulant Rexhepi	Gjilan	Stoves	500

List of 7 local identified stove producers. \*Only pellet stoves are listed in column of annual production.

The common investment opportunities are related to increases of production capacities: new or additional processing lines, investment on raw material processing (chippers, grinders, miller and dryers), improve electric capacities, and expansion of working premises. Most of the producers are relatively small and very labor intensive, presenting a good opportunity for job creation. There are several interested new comers/producers in this cluster due to continuous increased demand and high imports mainly from Serbia (99%).

In order to assess the market demand consumption EMPOWER also collect official information from customs about imports as well. Despite the fact that below table shows a total yearly consumption of 22,798 tons, the real consumption is at least 25% higher around 30,000 tons yearly mainly because illegal imports are much higher.



EMPOWER decided to organise a round table meeting with this cluster and other involved stakeholders such as government, donors, developing projects, financial institutions to address challenges, market opportunities and future investment plans in this sector. This round table will be organized in fourth quarter.

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency sector - visited 24 companies during this reporting period. Most of the companies visited are ones that submitted application for grant, but others that we identified as major players in the sector, in order to gather more details for each company, their obstacles, needs, opportunities and potential to be a partner in achieving project goals for this sector.

### ***ICT Sector***

During this quarter EMPOWER team continued going out in the field and met with businesses from all selected sectors. EMPOWER team had 27 meetings with 72 different businesses from private sector.

The purpose of these visits was to identify actual opportunities for firm-level sales expansion, to assess the potential job-creation impact of those opportunities, and to describe what stands in the way of companies realizing those opportunities. As a result of these visits and meetings, in this quarter we have identified five activities to support in next quarter. Majority of needs in this sector are in workforce development, more specifically in training people for concrete market opportunities, which require more qualified software developers, application developers and software testers. Five direct opportunities identified will start the training programs in next quarter, and we expect that from these direct support we will have 316 jobs created.

### ***Tourism Sector***

EMPOWER has identified 3 main clusters of Tourism sector: a) tour operators; b) hotel and lodging service providers; c) outdoor/adventure activity providers.

During Q3, EMPOWER focused its activities on identifying and analyzing cluster a) tour operators. Within one month from the start of the project EMPOWER identified all major inbound tour operators that operate in the market and on January 15 organized the first coordination roundtable where tour operators and stakeholders of the tourism sector convened to discuss the recent development of the sector as well as present business opportunities where the sector could grow.

Among participants there were other stakeholders such as the government agencies (MTI, KIESA, KEPa, Municipalities) as well as the donor community active in the tourism sector (GIZ, SDC-PPSE, French Embassy, UNDP) reaching a total of 38 participants.

Based on individual visits to companies we have identified actual opportunities for firm-level sales expansion, as well as the potential job-creation impact of those opportunities.

### ***Component 2 Total***

Total number of businesses opportunities identified under Component 2 to date reaches **39 identified sector investment opportunities** which exceeds the targeted number for this Activity Area for 19.

#### **1.2 Evaluate and prioritize firm-level job-creating business opportunities in opportunistic sectors**

**(Outputs/Deliverables/Expected Results for Year 1 Workplan - 8 viable focus sector investment opportunities (interventions / activities) selected for interventions; 24 total beneficiary's incl SMEs in supply chain. Total Year 1 results target for all Component 2 activities: €2.5 MM sales growth, 100 jobs)**

### ***Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Sector***

In Renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors only, there are seven Investment Candidates with estimated investment €190,700, which will potentially create 80 new FTE jobs, plus one investment candidate from other opportunistic sector, medical aromatically plant with estimated €42,250 which will potentially create 166 new jobs. Total 8 ICF with estimated investment €214,460 and potential to create 238 new jobs.

Applicant	Description of EMPOWER Activity	Sum of SAF Requested	Other Funding	Total	# Jobs	Average of SAF/Job
EKO Briket	Production of wooden briquette	€ 10,000	€ 15,000	€ 25,000	10	€ 1,000
Enrad Zagreb Trade Fair	Production of radiators	€ 4,100	€ 2,579	€ 6,679	15	€ 273
Europa	Wood Pellets	€ 39,000	€ 50,000	€ 89,000	15	€ 2,600
Jeta-H	Production of wood pellet & briquette	€ 12,000	€ 10,000	€ 22,000	9	€ 1,333
Biopellet	Production of wooden pellet	€ 41,000	€ 19,900	€ 60,900	12	€ 3,417
Enrad	Radiators	€ 9,600	€ 4,000	€ 13,600	12	€ 800
Thes-Ari	Upgrade of wood briquette production line to increase production capacities in order to meet market demands.	€ 75,000	€ 53,600	€ 128,600	7	€ 10,714
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>€ 190,700</b>	<b>€ 155,079</b>	<b>€ 345,779</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>€ 2,877</b>

### ICT Sector

In ICT sectors there are five Investment Candidates with estimated investment €194,770, which will potentially create 316 new FTE jobs,

Applicant	Description of EMPOWER Activity	Sum of SAF Requested	Other Funding	Total	# Jobs	Average of SAF/Job
AdaptivIT In-Company Training	Software applications	€ 58,420	€ 55,225	€ 113,645	40	€ 1,461
Maxtel	On the job IT training	€ 48,000	€ 120,500	€ 168,500	170	€ 282
MikroBiz In-Company Training	Software applications	€ 9,400	€ 8,000	€ 17,400	10	€ 940
STIKK	Training, Internship and Employment of youngsters on ICT	€ 48,950	€ 137,790	€ 186,740	70	€ 699
Cactus	Software Testers	€ 30,000	€ 16,600	€ 46,600	26	€ 1,154
		<b>€ 194,770</b>	<b>€ 338,115</b>	<b>€ 532,885</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>€ 907</b>

### Tourism Sector

Based on individual visits in companies we have identified actual opportunities for firm-level sales expansion, as well as the potential job-creation impact of those opportunities. To date we have identified and will support Scardus in the development of the promotional video for the ski resort of Brezovia. The promotional material will be broadcasted and promoted by TGR – Teton Gravity Research in the North American and West European market among the passionate of the winter sports.

Applicant	Description of EMPOWER Activity	Sum of SAF Requested	Other Funding	Total	# Jobs	Average of SAF/Job
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Scardus Tourism Video	Extreme Sports Association	€ 5,200	€ 24,800	€ 30,000	0	€ 0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€ 5,200</b>	<b>€ 24,800</b>	<b>€ 30,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>€ 0</b>

### ***Component 2 Total***

Total number of viable focus sector investment opportunities (interventions / activities) selected for interventions under Component 2 reaches 13, which exceeds the targeted number for this Activity Area for 5. While total number of jobs expected is 396 or **296 more than projected** for this activity area in Year One Workplan.

## **2. Expand market connections of opportunistic sector firms**

### **2.1 Design and implement B2B activities to stimulate business opportunities**

#### **2.1.1 Selective trade show attendance**

#### **2.1.2 Incoming / outgoing B2B for exports**

#### **2.1.3 Domestic major buyer connections for import substitution**

**(Outputs/Deliverables/Expected Results for Year 1 Workplan - 4-6 trade shows / B2B activities completed, 15 company beneficiaries / New business for opportunistic sector producers with 5 domestic importers, 10 beneficiaries / 5 new buyer relationships)**

### ***Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Sector***

As result of initial assessment of wood biomass fuel cluster EMPOWER organised the very first *Wood Biomass Fuel Value Chain Stakeholders Roundtable*, 3/25. EMPOWER organized this event and invited approximately 30 participants to (i) promote networking and communication among stakeholders in the renewable energy sector, (ii) review the structure of the wood biomass renewable energy value chain in Kosovo, (iii) share views on size and potential growth of the market, and (iv) discuss and prioritize shared challenges to and needs for the industry's growth. 27 participants included wood biomass fuel producers (12), stove producers (5), donors and IFIs (GIZ, EBRD/KOSEP, World Bank, AUK, and IFC), and GoK agencies (MIT, AKEE and MED). The discussion at the meeting was well-focused and quite active. Key findings:

- Market opportunity: Significant import substitution potential exists for both wood pellet fuel and stove producers. Domestic demand for pellets (~30K tons/year) is at least double current production capacity, and at least 2,500 pellet stoves are imported annually.
- Raw material: The biggest challenge in pellet production is raw material supply, which is mainly due to forest management practices controlled by government. Tenders to private companies (including some pellet producers) to clean the forests are given only on a year-to-year basis, which is highly inefficient and inhibits the contractor's investment in forest management. This problem is related to the lack of forest certification in Kosovo in general, which is in turn related to the absence of definition of permissible economic use in current law on national parks (where 2/3 of Kosovo's best forests are) In addition, the import of sawdust by pellet producers, instead of being treated as a production input, is taxed as if it was the import of final pellets/briquettes, simply helping foreign producers.
- Pellet production capacities: Current production is covers 35-50 % of the market. All current producers are increasing processing capacities and need additional investment.
- Stove production. Local stove production is small, though capabilities exist. Access to finance, welders training, and better coordination with pellet producers are needed. It was remarkable to find that pellet and stove producers were in many cases not even aware of each other – but this is a typical benefit of such cluster meetings.

- Pellet and stove quality certification: Global standards and metrology for pellet heating efficiency and moisture content, and for stove energy efficiency, are well-known, but not formally applied by any recognized certification body in Kosovo, which puts local products at a disadvantage to imports with these certifications – or even simply with the perception that imported is better.
- Promotion. There was extensive discussion of the lack of consumer information about the advantages of adopting energy-saving technologies. Participants also noted the general problem of bias among Kosovo consumers that foreign products are superior – even for the case of pellets from Serbia. There are certainly Kosovo pellets that are as good as those imported, as is emerging stove production. Again, however, the lack of quality certification make it difficult to make the case, and in any case there is no organized campaign to do so. As is typical, participants blamed this on the government, but we pointed out that it is the private industry itself that has the greatest incentive to jointly finance a promotional campaign.

EMPOWER notices that there is a lack of interaction between stakeholders of wood biomass fuel value chain. For next quarter we will organize a roundtable with the main objectives of promoting networking and communication among stakeholders in the renewable energy sector. This roundtable will be also discuss the potential of growth of the market from the view stakeholder's view. As a result of this round table EMPOWER will come up with prioritised list of shared challenges and needs that the industry has and identify interventions and actions to meet those needs.

### ***ICT Sector***

EMPOWER team meet with STIKK representative and GIZ to discuss about supporting ICT firms to participate in B2B Forum in Berlin. Agreed that this time GIZ and other donor will support Kosovar firms to participate in Berlin. EMPOWER staff will join the group and search for business opportunities for Kosovar ICT firms. Main objective of this visit is to meet with potential businesses/partners that need and are planning to outsource IT services. Outsourcing is identified as one of biggest potential for most of the ICT firms and activities like this are the right way to find new partners and potential new contracts.

### ***Tourism Sector***

EMPOWER has supported the participation of local inbound tour operators in two international tourism fairs; ITB that took place in Berlin, Germany between March 4 – 8 and Destination Nature that took place in Paris, France between March 19 – 22.

Five tour operators represented the Kosovo touristic offer in the global tourism fair ITB Berlin. Kosovo tour operators presented their offer to major international buyers that showed interest in including Kosovo in their Balkan tours. More than 120 B2B meetings took place during the fair some of resulting in contracts signed amounting over twenty thousand euros. Further, there are negotiations between Kosovo operators and international tours operators for groups visiting Kosovo as well as the development of 1/2 day tours of Kosovo as part of wider regional and Balkan tours.

Four Kosovo tour operators participated at the Destination Nature, Fair in Paris. Kosovo tour operators presented their touristic offer in the French market, they had more than 30 B2B meetings with French tour operators interested to include Kosovo in their itinerary as the new destination of the Balkans.

Due to the B2B and B2C character of the fair many French visitors approached the Kosovo stand requesting information on possible destinations to visit as well as tours that the operators offer. This was the second time that Kosovo participates at this international tourism fair and the first time that local tour operators had the possibility to present their products to the French tourists. EMPOWER supported the participation of four Kosovo tour operators (Balkan Natural Adventure of Peja, Catun of Junik, Sharri Eco Tour of Prizren, and Nuovo Monte of Novobardo). The operators had more than 30 B2B meetings with French tour operators interested to include Kosovo in their itineraries as a new Balkans destination. The fair also had a B2C component, and many individuals visited the stand to obtain information about Kosovo. The actual sales and contract of these B2B meetings will be presented in next quarter.



## ***Component 2 Total***

Two out of 6 Trade Shows / B2B are organized under Component 2. It is expected that the rest of the events will be organized in last quarter of the year.

### **3. Facilitate access to business finance for opportunistic sector firms**

#### **3.1. Assist firms in getting finance required for business opportunities**

**(Outputs/Deliverables/Expected Results for Year 1 Workplan - 10 qualified local financial consultants deployed / € 3.0 MM in new finance for beneficiary firms)**

#### ***Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Sector***

The access to finance needs of wood biomass fuel value chain were highly addressed at the round table meeting of 3/25, intentionally the EBRD- KOSEP program had a presentation on access to finance opportunities, followed by IFC introduction of their finance program. Finance is needed by pellet and stove producers for expansion, and by businesses, institutions, and consumers who need to purchase and install energy-saving appliances. KOSEP/EBRD presented its program, which is good but provides only partial finance, though this might be complemented with conventional bank finance. Certainly at the consumer level, full financing with low interest rates and long tenors is needed to allow households to overcome the significant up-front costs. TEB, KRK, AFK, and IFC programs with BPB and NLB were also mentioned. However, the financing sources are not yet anywhere close to the need.

### **4. Develop workforce skills**

**(Outputs/Deliverables/Expected Results for Year 1 Workplan - 8 in-company trainings, 80 trainees / 10 training programs for individuals (outside companies), 100 trainees / 2 vocational educational institutes add courses to curricula)**

EMPOWER team identified activities in skills training during this quarter and four Agreements have been signed. Agreements signed during this quarter are: AUK – TDI for training of 20 female in IT, MicroBiz for training of 10 individuals in IT field, Menakon for 20 women on Tailoring, Adaptivit for training of 50 individuals on IT skills.

During this quarter EMPOWER team visited MEST and discusses idea of establishing local VET Councils in regions. This idea was accepted and MEST will support this activity. Agreed that members of Local VET Councils should be representatives from lead sector companies in the region, representatives from VET Schools, Chamber of Commerce, Vocational Training Centres and Regional Employment Centres under umbrella of Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW), representatives from University, ect. EMPOWER staff visited VET School ARTI and ARBERIA in Gjilan and investigated the conditions of the school for practical work, collaboration with private businesses and have been seen that students from these schools are not attending practical work in enterprises regularly and schools are not equipped with needed equipment in the school for doing practise.

EMPOWER team visited Municipality of Gjilan and discussed idea for establishing local VET Council with Director of Education Department and representative from Department of Economic Development. They said that Municipality of Gjilan will support establishing Local VET Council and will participate in meeting regularly.

EMPOWER staff visited Regional Employment Centre and Vocational Training Centre in Prizren. Both Institutions are under umbrella of Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. We discussed about Project in Brezovica and need for planning and making strategy for education and training in skills, training of people in skill needed for this region.



EMPOWER Team had a meeting with Management staff of Transformational Leadership Program – USAID Project. EMPOWER will collaborate with TLP Project. The project will enhance higher education reform through collaboration with University of Prishtina and Universities in USA. In regard to IT TLP will support University of Prishtina, faculty of engineering, energy and IT with capacity building and curricula development. TLP will create Advisory Committee for education strategy with around 35 members from universities, businesses, STIKK and other stakeholders. It was considered that EMPOWER WfD Specialist to participate and contribute to the committee. Later will be established subcommittee groups with specific tasks. TLP will initiate and facilitate establishment of partnership between Arizona State University and University of Prishtina – Faculty of Engineering, Energy and IT.

### **Component 3 - Strengthening Capacity of Local Partners**

Activities pertaining to Component 3 will commence in Quarter 3.

### **CROSS CUTTING ISSUES: PRIORITY POPULATIONS**

The aim of EMPOWER project is to implement innovative approaches in all project's activities and initiatives by targeting members of our four priority populations: women, youth, North Kosovo residents, and other marginalized groups, to achieve a profound impact on society through providing them with the required skills and creating more suitable jobs.

In the reporting quarter, EMPOWER met with key actors from the organizations working on women, youth and minority issues to begin identification of concrete actions and activities that will unfold in the coming months.

#### **WOMEN**

#### **Employment for Survivors of Sexual Violence during the War**

##### **Office of the President & the National Council for the Survivors of Sexual Violence during the War**

EMPOWER attended the second meeting of the Council, facilitated by the Office of the President. Other attendees included representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development, Ministry of Trade and Industry, UNDP, EBRD, TEB Bank, and other civil society and NGOs that deal with women's issues, including economic empowerment. EMPOWER presented to the entire group the idea to arrange for several of the women being trained by Kosovo Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims (KRCT) to be hired by a large wedding gown and formal fair producer in Drenas. The idea was appreciated by all. KRCT representatives requested a follow up meeting with EMPOWER to work out the details.

#### **Meeting with Women's Organizations**

##### **Kosovo Women's Chamber of Commerce – G7**

Issues discussed between EMPOWER and G7 included: why there are few women business managers; why women export less and hesitate to network or seek other markets; and the lack of qualified skilled women workers for certain profiles, such as interior designers. G7 said that their current needs for assistance include: a research on the position of Kosovo women in business; leadership training, support to women in business to attend more fairs and BEB events within and outside of Kosovo. Thanks to the communication channels established at the meeting, collaboration between EMPOWER and G7 has continued with the great interest indicated by the Executive Director to be part of focus groups with women across Kosovo that EMPOWER is organizing. On the other hand, EMPOWER arranged for the Executive Director to be part of a panel of discussion on women's entrepreneurship organized by the EU Office on the occasion of International Women's Day.

#### **UN Women**

This organization is one of the leading agencies working on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which is committed to enable women's contribution to all stages of peacebuilding, peacemaking, and conflict prevention. The work done by the agencies in Kosovo seeks to support women's participation, protection and empowerment, including economic empowerment. UN Women is currently fundraising for a new project that links economic empowerment and security for

women, which will serve as a platform for interethnic cooperation. This project will target women in four municipalities in the north, and in Gjakova, Gjilan and Dragash. They are interested in pursuing cooperation opportunities with EMPOWER.

### **Women in Business**

EMPOWER met with the Executive Director and her Deputy to discuss about the changes the organization is going through in terms of membership criteria and new policies that aim to create a group of driven women entrepreneurs and associations that can move along the agenda of women's empowerment. As a result of this meeting, in April 2015 EMPOWER will have a presentation on its grant scheme to all members of this organizations.

### **Kosovo Women's Network (KWN)**

At the meeting, EMPOWER learned more in detail about the organization's activities in economic empowerment of women, and received useful information on organizations and individual businesses in the same sectors that EMPOWER supports. KWN is interested in cooperating with EMPOWER to set up a coordination group between all donors and other organizations in Kosovo that are working on women's economic empowerment issues. This initiative will materialize in the following quarter. Additionally, as a result of the meeting, KWN said they will apply for a grant to support internship for a group of young women programmers who will be developing an application to help other women report domestic violence.

### **Promoting Private Sector Employment (PPSE)**

At the request of PPSE, EMPOWER met with representatives of the project and their gender consultant, who wanted to learn about EMPOWER's gender-related plans and activities, in particular to textile and wood processing sectors, as the PPSE is still in the process of deciding which of these two to choose. PPSE proposed that it would be a good idea for all donors' gender officers to meet on bi-monthly basis to avoid overlapping of activities and share information.

### **Regional Conference "Challenges and Achievements of the Albanian Woman in the Post-War Period"**

EMPOWER was invited to attend the regional conference organized on the International Day of Women, by the Municipality of Gjakovë/Djakovica with the support of UN Women. The conference attracted over 200 participants. The program was centered around four panel discussions: 1 – Rehabilitation of Women and Post-War Challenges; 2 – Economic Empowerment of Women to Improve Economic-Social Wellbeing; 3 – Women in Decision-Making and Challenges of this Journey; and 4 – Women's Health and Vital Life Guarantee Sound Families and Society. Women panelists were women of prominence in their areas of expertise, and represented Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro. The general message of the panel discussion was that women in business should be bold, creative and hard-working, and that women require stronger support networks to help them grow businesses and personally. At the conference, EMPOWER established new contacts with several women's organizations operating in Kosovo.

### **Meetings with Women Businesses**

EMPOWER met with Punë Dore NENA. They sell handmade clothing, handbags and accessories; organize events for children; crochet and knitting classes for women and children. The business was registered in September 2013, as Independent Crafts Shop, and is a beneficiary of a USAID grant for young entrepreneurs. The owner is seeking our support for assistance with increasing market opportunities, promotion of her products further within Kosovo market of buyers and designers, and skills training for herself and especially women who work for her business, who come from a pool of women that have no skills other than knitting, crocheting, or embroidering to make a living.

EMPOWER met with Balkanspring.com, an online boutique which sells handmade clothing for men, women and children, accessories; greeting cards and boast 42 Kosovo brands ranging from expensive dresses and items for brides to silver accessories to handmade soaps and shoes. The concept was created by Athene Prosjektsledelse ([www.athene-prosjekt.no](http://www.athene-prosjekt.no)) aiming to improve the international export channels for businesses, talented designers and creators in Kosovo, through the internet and not consider fairs and the only option for selling products. Their primary goal is to support women entrepreneurs with a way of boosting their sales through ways unexplored before. There seem to be good opportunities for collaboration between EMPOWER and Balkanspring in terms of training of women or organizing special events to exhibit and promote the variety of crafts women in Kosovo are engaged in. Communication with Balkanspring will continue.

### **Focus Group with Women Organizations**

EMPOWER organized the first two in a series of focus group discussions with women's organizations across Kosovo. The first two focus group discussions were held in Mitrovicë/a south and north, and were attended by organizations from the surrounding areas too. The participating organizations work in the area of women's economic and social empowerment; human rights; rights of youth and persons with disabilities. Participants in both focus group discussions shared a lot of information and experiences from their work, as well as recommendations on how to advance inclusion of more women in the market labour and how to achieve their economic empowerment. The information collected from these focus groups will inform EMPOWER's gender plan, and strategic communications strategy.

### **Lean in Kosovo**

As part of its social inclusion / gender efforts, EMPOWER Private Sector established the "Lean In Kosovo" group. This group has been established in the spirit of "Lean In" philosophy promoted by Facebook's CEO – Sheryl Sandberg – and has already been registered in the global digital platform of "Lean In" Groups. The members of this group dedicate their time on voluntary basis. The goal of "Lean In Kosovo" is to facilitate a dialogue for women through networking and support systems to help women members and beyond that, i.e. women in the closer circles or communities where the member women live and work, to achieve their professional / life goals.

The group aims to achieve behaviour change at a broader degree in the society, and assist with personal development plans at the individual's level for women and girls who will be part of such activities. Since the group is an initiative of EMPOWER Private sector, in the beginning the activities shall focus on the five main sectors that EMPOWER supports, and will deal with awareness issues regarding the need to create more jobs for women and girls.

In the reporting period, the group created a blog (<https://leaninkosova.wordpress.com/>) that will provide a platform for group members and other interested people to publish their writings, which contribute to the agenda of the 'Lean in Kosovo' vision.

Two members of the Lean in Kosova group were featured in the March issue of Flatra Magazine, part of the section on successful women.

EMPOWER Private Sector was part of the fair organized on the first day of the annual event Week of Women. Our booth was visited by over a hundred people, who received folders with information on EMPOWER's grant opportunities and gender-related initiatives.

Also, EMPOWER has been invited to present its work at the TEDx Prishtina Women that will take place on May 28, 2015. This year's theme of TEDx Prishtina Women is "momentum" to celebrate and share success stories from women innovators and doers who have positively impacted Kosovo and/or their professional fields to facilitate debate and discussion on issues important to Kosovo people, and to create a community of young, outspoken citizens able to influence policies and decision making.

### **International Month of Women**

During the month of March, EMPOWER has updated the project's Facebook page daily with a series of notes on the role of women in economic sectors that EMPOWER is involved in. These notes are: "Women in IT", "Women in Fashion", "Women and Wood Processing Industry", "Women and Energy Efficiency", and "Women in Tourism". These notes received a lot of attention on Facebook in the form of likes, shares and comments. The notes were posted in three languages and were also were distributed at all public events EMPOWER participated in during March.

### **YOUTH**

There are some concrete results for youth beneficiaries for this reporting period. From three grant that were approved in March, in all majority of beneficiaries are youth. Out of 113 direct beneficiaries who participate in training programs 105 of them are youth. Most of them are with grant to AUK – TDI, where 55 young

females will be trained in IT Job Training, will undergo Internship program and most of them will get jobs after this program. The other two activities that have youth beneficiaries are, ADAPTIVIT where all 43 direct beneficiaries that are participating in the training which will result with concrete jobs are youth, and Menakon where 7 out of 20 beneficiaries are young females.

Grantee Name	Sector	Activity Title	New Jobs	Female Beneficiaries	Youth Beneficiaries
AUK - TDI	ICT	Females in IT Job Training, Internship and Employment	55	55	55
ADAPTIVIT	ICT	On-the-Job Software Engineering Training	43	12	43
MENAKON	Apparel	Practical Training in Apparel-Production Skills	15	15	7
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>113</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>105</b>

In the reporting quarter, EMPOWER met with UNDP's Active Labour Market Programmes 2 (ALMP2), which assists mainly the young people in Kosovo to find jobs. The project works with Employment Offices, Vocational Training Centres, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to train their staff how to assist registered jobseekers, and also draft strategies and policies that equip young people with skills needed in the labour market. One useful piece of information obtained during the meeting concerns the subsidy scheme the project has developed with the Ministry of Returns. According to this scheme, ALMP2 subsidizes for 12 months half of the salaries up to a maximum of €150 for every returnee that is hired.

EMPOWER met with Linda Namlxhiu, founder of the NGO Ecothink that focuses mainly on environmental protection and awareness raising on the importance of recycling and ecology, collection of discarded materials, such as paper, plastic cups or bottles, bags, and re-using these materials. The educational activities of the NGO target mainly children and youth, who are engaged in creative work to re-use collected materials into artwork and decorations. The NGO also engages in these activities women from all ethnic communities living in Prizren and surrounding areas. The NGO is seeking to increase the amount of products and open a shop in Pristina. ENMPOWER will use information collected from this NGO and other similar initiatives to come up with a plan on how to support youth-empowering programs.

EMPOWER was invited to attend the public discussion Youth Employment through Apprenticeship organized by the EU Info and Cultural Center in Pristina. The discussion focused on vocational education in the municipality of Pristina and transition from school to work, as well as equipping youth with the right skills and experience for sustainable employment. The panel consisted of representatives of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Municipality of Pristina, HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation project, Swiss Diamond Hotel, and vocational School '7 shtatori' in Pristina. Issues raised by the public were the duration of vocational training, profiles taught by technical and vocational schools that no longer meet market requirements, the lack of information on the labour market trends, as well as lack of positive examples that can bring to change the behaviour of youth in terms of employment.

## NORTH KOSOVO RESIDENTS

EMPOWER has reached out actively to businesses and people in the North, please refer to the specific activities under Components 1 and 2 in the report. Representatives of businesses and organizations from the North were present at EMPOWER's launch event in Pristina. A second event was organized in Mitrovicë/a North, which was attended by more than 90 individuals and received good publicity in the regional media and USAID Facebook's page.

In addition, all information and promotional materials of EMPOWER are produced in Serbian language too. The project's website is up-to-date with information which also appears in three languages: Albanian, Serbian, and English, thus providing easier access to project information to all.

Note: The project has developed sign-in sheets used at all events that capture data such as ethnicity and gender, in order to monitor the diversity of attendees and take immediate remedial steps should be notice that this diversity begins to flounder.

## **MARGINALIZED MINORITIES**

### *Meetings with Civil Society Organizations*

EMPOWER met with Executive Director of Civikos platform Valdete Idrizi. The number one priority of Civikos currently is the Strategy of Cooperation between CSOs and the Government of Kosovo 2013 – 2017, and the work of the Council for the Implementation of this strategy. The Council comprises of representatives from CSOs and Government representatives at the level of permanent secretaries, so that they can have decision-making power. The Council has four objectives to work on: participation in drafting/implementation of laws; classification and profiling of social services provided by the CSOs; creation of a national scheme for public funds used by CSOs, and finally, defining the appropriate model of volunteerism for Kosovo. Civikos is interested in cooperating with EMPOWER's social inclusion activities, and is willing to provide assistance and contacts with their member organizations throughout Kosovo.

EMPOWER met with Community Building Mitrovica, which is interested in cooperating with our activities in the area of awareness raising and social inclusion. The group of organizations and businesses that CBM works with need training on how to collect market information, so a type of market research that would help women start new businesses or expand new ones.

EMPOWER met with RROGRAEK-Network of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Women's Organizations in Kosovo. This network was established to support, integrate and promote rights of women from these communities. Their activities fall under education, human rights, and gender equality. The population RROGRAEK targets is amongst the most vulnerable in the Kosovo society, and their needs for education and support are immense. The Executive Director sought the assistance of EMPOWER to provide training for the network members. The training needed would be on how to start up and run a business, or skills-training that would give them some advantage into finding employment. EMPOWER will follow up on this in the next quarter.

## **4. STATUS OF OVERALL ACTIVITY PROGRESS**

EMPOWER overall activity progress is in line with Year 1 Workplan. EMPOWER project is at the stage of implementation where most of preparatory work which includes operational/administrative is completed, project has engaged an excellent team, with only 2 positions still to be filled, neither of which is time-critical, we started with our Grant Program and more direct investments and activities that have immediate and long term impact.

## **5. LIST OF REPORTS/DELIVERABLES COMPLETED IN THE REPORTING PERIOD**

On October 22, 2014, the Project has submitted the following deliverables

- **Grants Manual approved on January 30, 2015**

Additionally, the Contractor submitted **Weekly Progress Reports and Meetings** by e-mail to COR on a weekly basis.

## **6. PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD**



## 7. ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION COMPLIANCE

During this quarter USAID approved Environmental Specialist proposed by EMPOWER. Environmental Specialist will serve project needs for conducting Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plans for all activities that require this action in accordance with Initial Environmental Examination instructions

## 8. ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR NEXT QUARTER

### Customize and install Project Activities Database (PAD)

Next quarter EMPOWER will finalize and install its Project Activities Database

### Receive, review, select, and approve subcontracts / grants

This is the basis for EMPOWER's work in creating new jobs and achieving its PMIs. We expect through the Grants Evaluation Committee to disburse at least 20 grants during the next quarter, and to approve at least 10 more grants for subsequent disbursement.

### Prepare initial EMPOWER print materials; establish project website and Facebook page

EMPOWER will continue to promote the project through its website, and printed material in next quarter.

### Donor Coordination

**Coordinate and align implementation strategies:** This is an ongoing activity that will continue through Quarters 3-4. Coordination with other donors proved to be successful. Two out of three grants awarded in this quarter are cofunded by other donors. This happened as a result of coordination EMPOWER established with other donors and was able to leverage for the funding of activities we are supporting.

In addition to other donors, EMPOWER is planning to have regular coordination meetings with AKT US and AKT Local Solution, considering that we may have overlapping activities and share of information is beneficial to all parties. As soon as AGRO will start actively with its activities we will have regular coordination meeting with this project too.

Regular coordination and discussion on joining forces to support certain activities we envision will happen with similar project such as Promoting Private Sector Employment (PPSE), Enhancing Youth Employment with who we have already partnered in two projects, Ministry of Trade and Industry, more specifically KIESA where we envision to have some joint activities, especially when it comes to supporting joint trade fairs presentations or participation, local and international. Other key donors that we consider regular coordination will happen are World Bank, UNDP, GIZ, Norwegian Embassy and others.

## Component 1 - Job Creation through Increasingly Competitive & Market-Oriented SMEs in Focus Sectors

Following activities are planned for next quarter for Component 1

Activity Area	Tasks/Activities
2.1 Consult with firms in Component 1 focus sectors to identify business opportunities and challenges	Identify 10 Investment Opportunity Candidates
2.1 Consult with firms in Component 1 focus sectors to identify business opportunities and challenges	Identify 10 Investment Opportunity Candidates
2.2 Evaluate and prioritize job-creating business opportunities	Select 4 Investment opportunities
3.1.1 Selective trade show attendance	Preparation for Keln Trade fair attendance
3.1.1 Selective trade show attendance	Attendance at Keln Trade Fair

3.1.1	Selective trade show attendance	Visit at TEXPO EuroAsia 2015 in Turkey
3.1.1	Selective trade show attendance	Visit at IF WEDDING FASHION in Turkey
3.1.1	Selective trade show attendance	Preparation for Regional Trade Fairs
3.1.2	Incoming / outgoing B2B for exports	incoming B2B for German Market
3.1.2	Incoming / outgoing B2B for exports	Outgoing B2B event in Albania
3.1.2	Incoming / outgoing B2B for exports	Incoming B2B for Albania Market (Apparel Association)
3.1.3	Domestic major buyer connections for import substitution	Meet at least 5 major buyers
3.1.3	Domestic major buyer connections for import substitution	Meet at least 5 major buyers
3.2	Establish / recruit producer sales agents	Recruit 1 sales agent (Albania Market)
3.2	Establish / recruit producer sales agents	Recruit 1 sales agent (German Market)
3.3.1	Map supply chains; facilitate clustering	Supply Chain Map initiated
3.3.1	Map supply chains; facilitate clustering	Supply Chain Map initiated
3.3.2	Initiate annual domestic industry conventions in wood and apparel	Industry Convention initiated
3.3.2	Initiate annual domestic industry conventions in wood and apparel	Industry Convention initiated
3.4.1	Promote Kosovo producers in foreign trade publications for the wood and apparel industries	Promote Apparel industry in Albania Market
4.1.1	Provide technical assistance to align products to market trends and to adapt products for specific target markets	Up to 2 companies assisted to align products to market trends and to adapt products for specific target markets
4.1.1	Provide technical assistance to align products to market trends and to adapt products for specific target markets	Up to 3 companies assisted to align products to market trends and to adapt products for specific target markets
4.1.2	Stimulate connections between local design schools and producers	Up to 10 connections between local design school and producers initiated
4.2.1	Provide technical assistance to improve factory productivity and quality management systems for certification	Technical Assistance for Improved Factory Productivity and QMS
4.2.1	Provide technical assistance to improve factory productivity and quality management systems for certification	Technical Assistance for Improved Factory Productivity and QMS
4.2.2	Establish Quality Certification Fund(s) to help defray beneficiary costs	Establish Quality Certification Fund for up to 10 companies



## **Component 2: Job Creation through Workforce Development & in Opportunistic Sectors**

Following activities are planned for next quarter for Component 2

Activity Area	Tasks/Activities
1.1 Consult with firms in Component 2 opportunistic sectors to identify business opportunities and challenges	Identify 12 Investment Opportunity Candidates
1.2 Evaluate and prioritize firm-level job-creating business opportunities in opportunistic sectors	Select 6 Investment opportunities
2.1.1 Selective trade show attendance	Preparation for Trade Show in Germany
2.1.3 Domestic major buyer connections for import substitution	Assess market opportunities and challenges of two EN clusters: b) Insulation production companies and c) geothermal/thermic pumps and solar energy installers/producers
3.1.2 Sponsor / advocate for firms with additional financial sources	Facilitate linkages between commercial banks and EN sector companies
4.1 Design and implement in-company or group of companies training and apprenticeship / internship programs to address skills needs specific to potential business opportunities	3 in company trainings for three different ICT businesses
4.1 Design and implement in-company or group of companies training and apprenticeship / internship programs to address skills needs specific to potential business opportunities	1 in-company training for one Energy Efficiency/Renewable Energy business
4.2 Design and implement training programs for individuals in skills with high market demand	1 Training program for Women in ICT
4.2 Design and implement training programs for individuals in skills with high market demand	3 ICT Training Programs
4.2 Design and implement training programs for individuals in skills with high market demand	1 Energy Efficiency/ RE training

## **Component 3: Strengthening Capacity of Local Partners**

EMPOWER will work closely with USAID in preparation of the process for selection of Lead Local Partner

### **Priority Populations**

Following activities are planned for next quarter for Priority Populations Component

Activity Area	Tasks/Activities
1. Develop and implement job-creating training programs for priority populations	1.2.1 Identify and support activities originated by youth-focused organization that create jobs for youth 1.2.2 Prioritize training and job creation activities in sectors that employ youth
2. Support job creation in North Kosovo	2.1 Conduct dedicated interventions in North Kosovo in all of the activity areas of Components 1 and 2 above. 2.1.1 Support networking / outsourcing between South Kosovo and North Kosovo firms